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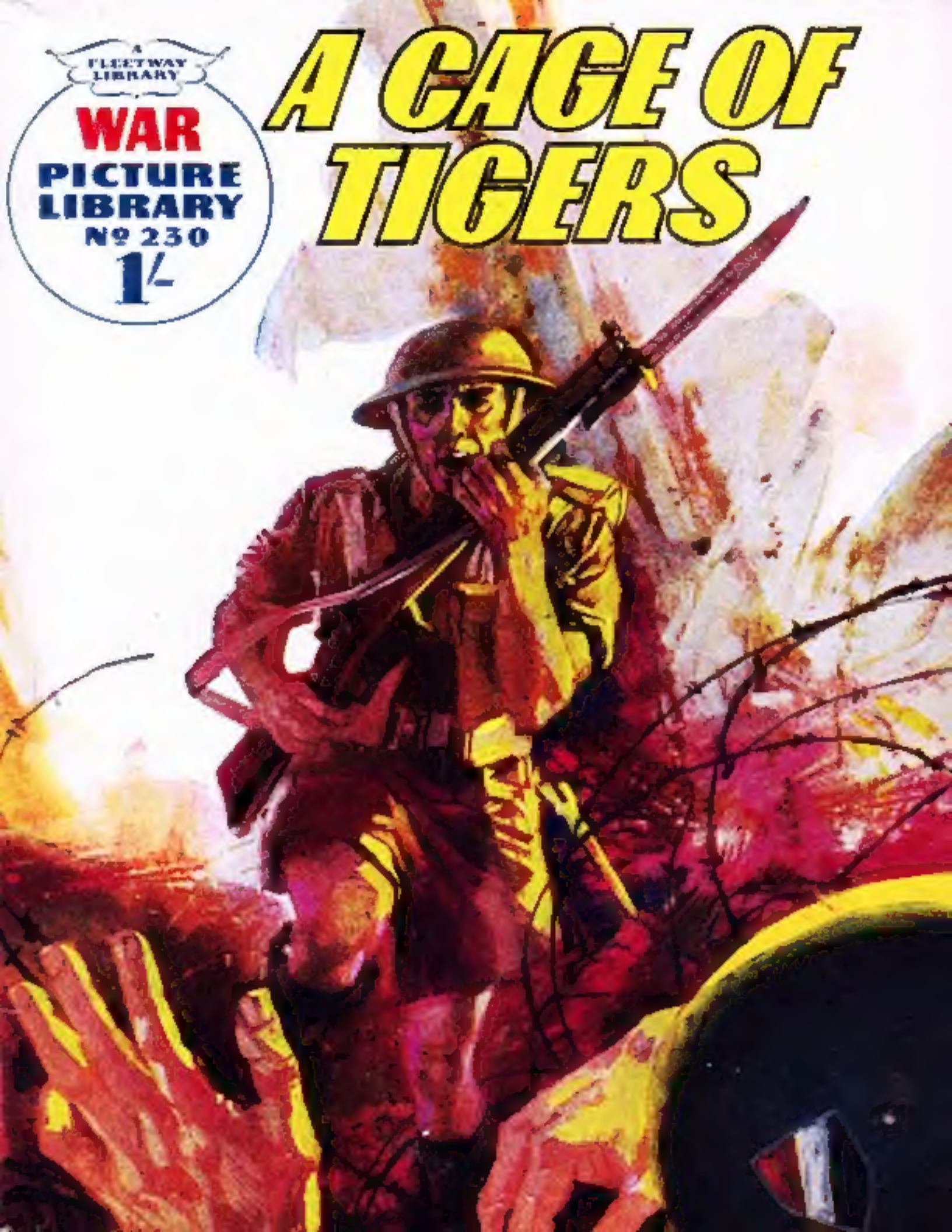
A CAGE OF TIGERS



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A CAGE OF TIGERS

COMMANDO – SPECIAL AIR SERVICE – LONG-RANGE DESERT GROUP – THESE WERE SOME OF THE NAMES GIVEN TO THE PICK OF BRITAIN'S FIGHTING MEN IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR. EXPERTS IN THE ART OF BATTLE, THESE SPECIALIST COMBAT UNITS WROTE GLORIOUS EXPLOITS INTO THE ALLIED HISTORY OF VICTORY. THE COMMANDOS WITH THEIR SEABORNE RAIDS ON THE ENEMY COASTS...

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A Cage Of Tigers

Chapter 1. Nazi Commando

A Cage Of Tigers

WITH AN ARROGANT NAZI SALATE, RUTZ TURNED AND STRUTTED OUT.
VERY NEATLY DONE, HERR GENERAL. IF ONLY THESE NAZI FANATICS WOULD LEAVE THE WAR TO THE WEHRMACHT.
I SUGGEST WE START WITH ONE SQUAD AS A TRIAL. IF IT IS SUCCESSFUL, WE CAN FORM A SCORE. I KNOW JUST THE OFFICER TO LEAD THAT FIRST RAIDER UNIT!
THEN GET HIM HERE QUICKLY— BEFORE RUTZ CHANGES HIS MIND!

WITHIN AN HOUR, A RADIO SIGNAL REACHED A CERTAIN YOUNG GERMAN INFANTRY OFFICER...
MESSAGE FROM REGIMENT H.Q., HERR LEUTNANT— YOU ARE TO REPORT TO ARMY STAFF H.Q. IMMEDIATELY!
THANKS, BRENNER- BUT YOU TELL THEM I'M TIED UP IN A LITTLE ARGUMENT WITH THE BRITISH AT THE MOMENT. WHEN THE ROW'S OVER, I'LL GET THERE!

THE OPERATOR, A RECENT REPLACEMENT, WRIGGLED OVER TO WHERE THE GRIZZLED FELDWEBEL GRINNED AT HIM...
BUT—BUT THAT MESSAGE MUST HAVE COME RIGHT DOWN FROM ARMY H.Q....
LISTEN, LITTLE MAN— WHEN LEUTNANT KURT WEBER IS FIGHTING ALONGSIDE HIS MEN, EVEN ADOLF HITLER COULDN'T MAKE HIM LEAVE!

ON INTO THE STORM OF GERMAN 88M.M. SHELLS CAME THE BRITISH TANKS AND INFANTRY, DESPITE MOUNTING LOSSES.
HOLD YOUR FIRE UNTIL I GIVE THE COMMAND!

THEN THE BRITISH INFANTRY BEGAN TO FAN OUT IN BATTLE LINE...
FEUER-RASCH! RAPID-FIRE!

MAUSER AND SPANDAU LEAD LASHED INTO THE BRITISH CHARGE...
KEEP FIRING— IF WE CAN HOLD THEM OFF FOR TWENTY SECONDS THEY'LL BREAK AND RETREAT!

BUT STILL THE BRITISH TANKS AND BAYONETS CAME ON AND KURT WEBER'S JAW TIGHTENED WITH THE THOUGHT OF THE HAND-TO-HAND FIGHT THAT WOULD COME. THEN, SUDDENLY...

URGENT FROM HEADQUARTERS, HERR LEUTNANT— WE ARE OUTFLANKED ON BOTH SIDES. WE ARE TO WITHDRAW OR WE'LL BE CUT OFF!

DONNERWETTER! AT THE DOUBLE, BACK TO THE PREPARED LINE BEYOND THE RIDGE!

I'M WITH YOU, HERR LEUTNANT...

GET THE MEN BACK, FELDWEBEL — LEAVE THIS TO ME!

RELUCTANTLY, FELDWEBEL HANS BLOCHER TURNED AWAY FROM HIS OFFICER'S SIDE AND URGED HIS MEN TO THE NEW POSITION.
AAAGH!

KURT WEBER HAD EMPTIED HIS LAST MAGAZINE, WHEN HE SAW THE YOUNG SIGNALLER WRITHING ON THE SAND.
MY BACK— MY BACK...
DON'T WORRY, YOUNGSTER, YOU'RE NOT STAYING HERE TO DIE!

MOMENTS LATER, HE WAS HALF SUPPORTING THE WOUNDED MAN INTO THE NEW LINE OF DEFENCE
LET ME TAKE HIM, HERR LEUTNANT...
GET HIM BACK BEHIND COVER—HE NEEDS A DOCTOR BADLY HIMMEL, THAT WAS A RUN—FOR A YOUNGSTER, HE'S HEAVY!

BIG BLOCHER GRINNED TO HIMSELF.
YOUNGSTER, SAYS THE LEUTNANT! WHY, HE HIMSELF IS NO MORE THAN THREE OR FOUR YEARS OLDER. IN FACT, HE'S YOUNG ENOUGH TO BE MY SON!

THE BRITISH ATTACK HAD ACHIEVED ITS MAIN OBJECTIVES—AND FOR A WHILE, THE FRONT WAS QUIET AS EACH SIDE LICKED ITS WOUNDS
TIME I TOOK UP THAT INVITATION TO VISIT THE TOP BRASS!
ANY IDEA WHAT IT'S ABOUT, HERR LEUTNANT? DO YOU THINK YOU'RE BEING TRANSFERRED BACK TO THE FALLSCHIRMEREN—THE PARATROOPERS?

KURT WEBER HAD FOUGHT WITH GERMANY'S CRACK PARACHUTE CORPS IN CRETE, UNTIL HE WAS WOUNDED AND POSTED TO AN INFANTRY REGIMENT, IN FACT
AS SOON AS I KNOW, I'LL GET A MESSAGE BACK TO YOU! THANKS FOR EVERYTHING, BLOCHER—I WON'T FORGET THE BEST FELDWEBEL I EVER HAD.
IF THEY WANT THE BEST FELDWEBEL AS WELL AS THE BEST OFFICER FOR THAT POSTING, YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME, SIR. GOOD LUCK!

AT STAFF POSTING H Q., KURT WEBER HEARD OF THE NEW RAIDER FORCE...
...WELL, THAT'S THE PLAN, LEUTNANT WEBER. WE SUGGEST A UNIT OF EIGHT MEN, LED BY YOURSELF, ALL VOLUNTEERS, OF COURSE. WILL YOU TAKE IT ON..?
IT WOULD TAKE A COURT-MARTIAL TO STOP ME! AND I'VE GOT ONE VOLUNTEER ALREADY—MY OWN TRUPP FELDWEBEL—A FIRST-CLASS REGULAR SOLDIER!

MAJOR RUTZ SHRUGGED IRRITABLY.
I WAS ABOUT TO OFFER ONE OF MY OWN MEN OF THE S.A. AS YOUR *UNTER-OFFIZIER*—BUT IF YOU PREFER A PLODDING WEHRMACHT FELDWEBEL...
BLOCHER HAS LEARNED HIS TRADE THE HARD WAY, HERR MAJOR—AND HE'S TOUGHER THAN ANY S.A. THAT I'VE EVER MET! *I WANT HIM!*

WATCH YOUR TONGUE, HERR LEUTNANT! THE S.A. ARE INVINCIBLE IN ACTION—ONLY THE WEAKNESS OF OTHER GERMAN TROOPS ALONGSIDE THEM HAS EVER FORCED THEM TO RETREAT! THEY ARE NAZIS—THE MASTER SOLDIERS OF THE MASTER RACE!

THIN-LIPPED, RUTZ STRODE OUT...
THE MAJOR IS— AH— RATHER A FANATIC ABOUT THE S.A ..
HE'S A FANATIC, ALL RIGHT / A PURE-BRED FANATIC WHO THINKS THAT EVERYONE BUT THE NAZIS IS A SLAVE, A FOOL— OR AN ANIMAL /

WITHIN A FEW HOURS, FELDWEBEL BLOCHER HAD JOINED LEUTNANT KURT WEBER...
THIS IS OUR TEAM, BLOCHER— ALL VOLUNTEERS AND AS TOUGH AS ARMY BOOTS / WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THEM ?
WITH YOU TO LEAD US, SIR, WE'LL GIVE THE BRITISH SOMETHING TO WORRY ABOUT /
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THE TRAINING...
GOOD! IF THEY'D BEEN BRITISH, WE'D HAVE HAD A COMPLETE SUPPLY DUMP OPENED TO US FOR BLOWING UP!
WE'VE GOT THE RIGHT SORT OF MEN, SIR - THEY'RE FORGETTING TO BE PARADE GROUND SOLDIERS AND TRYING TO BE BANK ROBBERS!

LONG NIGHT MARCHES...
TEUFEL! HOW MUCH FARTHER? WE'VE DONE TWENTY-FIVE KILOMETRES ALREADY!
IF WE GET CAUGHT A HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE KILOMETRES BEHIND THE BRITISH LINES, YOU'LL MARCH OUT - AND LIKE IT!

A MONTH LATER...
THEY'RE AS FULL OF FIGHT AS A CAGE FULL OF TIGERS, HERR GENERAL. IT'S UP TO YOU TO TURN THEM LOOSE ON OUR FIRST TASK!
BE AT MY H Q IN TWENTY MINUTES. LEUTNANT AND YOUR TIGERS WILL BE SHOWN THEIR PREY!
THAT RAILWAY LINK BETWEEN THE PORT AND KASFERAT SUPPLY DEPOT – IF IT COULD BE PUT OUT OF ACTION FOR A WEEK, IT WOULD DELAY THE BRITISH BUILD-UP FOR THEIR NEXT OFFENSIVE FOR A MONTH!
HAVEN'T THE LUFTWAFFE TRIED TO BOMB IT, SIR?

THERE ARE THREE ENEMY FIGHTER AIRFIELDS WITHIN MINUTES' FLIGHT OF IT. WE HAVE ALREADY LOST TWENTY PLANES TRYING TO GET TO IT / NO, IT'S YOUR PIGEON — AND HOW YOU DO IT IS YOUR PROBLEM.
BUT THAT LINE HAS GOT TO BE BROKEN!

KURT WEBER EXPLAINED THE OPERATION AND OBJECTIVE TO HIS EAGER-EYED RAIDERS.
THE BIG PROBLEM IS GETTING THERE — AND BACK. WE CAN'T PARACHUTE BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT TRAINED — AND IT'S A LONG HIKE BACK. GOING THROUGH THE BRITISH LINES IN SCOUT CARS WOULD RISK A FIGHT WE WANT TO AVOID.
THEN HOW, HERR LEUTNANT?
THERE'S JUST ONE WAY..

Chapter 2. Moonlight Ambush

HE LANDED ON SAND THAT WAS AS HARD AS CONCRETE.
RIGHT IN THE WADI — AND ITS FLOOR IS AS FIRM AS I HOPED IT WOULD BE! NOW FOR THE MARKERS.

TEN MINUTES LATER...
THERE ARE THE LIGHTS MARKING THE CENTRE LINE OF THE WADI PASSENGERS, STAND BY FOR BUMPS — WE'RE GOING DOWN!

I ASKED FOR THE BEST PILOT IN THE DESERT LUFTWAFFE— I ONLY HOPE HE IS!

THE JUNKERS TOUCHED DOWN ON THE ROCK-HARD BED OF THE WADI AND, JOLTING AND BOUNCING, IT RACED ALONG IT FOR TWO HUNDRED YARDS.
HIMMEL! THEY SAID I WOULD HAVE TO MAKE A ROUGH LANDING — BUT THIS...
OUT! RAUS — RAUS!

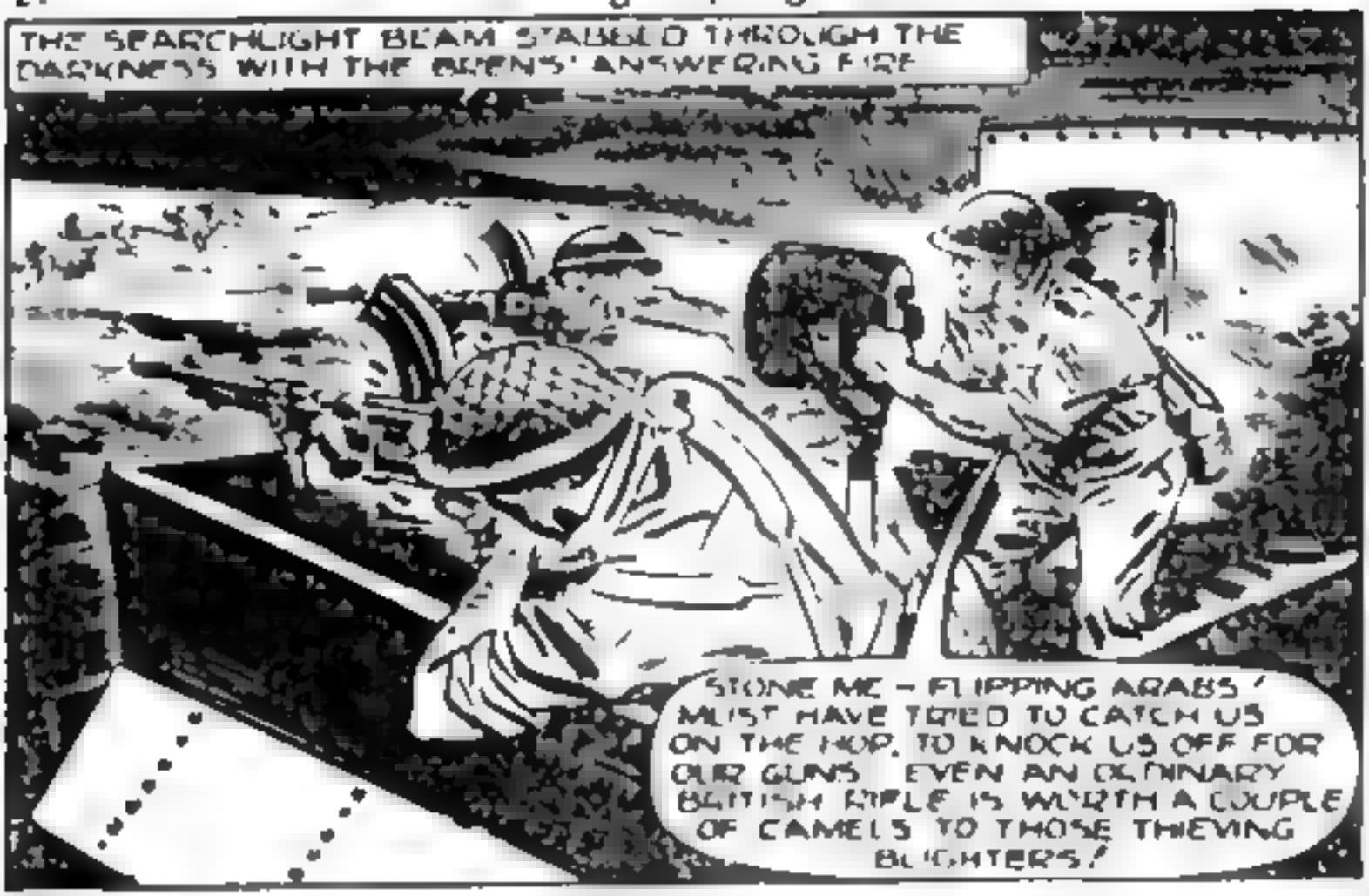
EIGHT SHADOWY FIGURES LEAPED FROM THE TRANSPORT'S OPEN DOOR
GIVE US AN HOUR — IF WE'RE NOT BACK, GET OUT OF IT!
WE'RE READY, HERR LEUTNANT — LET'S GET TO IT!

THE LINE IS JUST BEYOND THAT CREST. WE'LL LOOK IT OVER – THEN MOVE IN FAST!
MY MEN KNOW THEIR DIVERSION ACT BY HEART, SIR!

ACH – A SUPPLY TRAIN! IF WE COULD ONLY HAVE FIXED THE EXPLOSIVE IN TIME TO HAVE CAUGHT THAT!
THERE'LL BE ANOTHER ONE, SIR – WE'LL BAG THAT WHEN IT COMES.
JA! THAT ARMOURED DIESEL ENGINE IN FRONT PATROLS THIS SECTOR EVERY TEN MINUTES – WHEN IT COMES BACK YOUR MEN HAVE GOT TO BE READY TO KEEP IT BUSY! GET MOVING!

WHEN THE BRITISH PATROL ENGINE CAME BACK...
THIS IS THE LIFE, EH, SARGE? FOUR HOURS DUTY — TWENTY HOURS OFF TO KIP AND SUNBATHE ON THE BEACH. WHO SAYS YOU CAN'T ENJOY A WAR?
KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN AND YOUR MOUTH SHUT, SOLDIER — OR I'LL SHUT IT FOR YOU WITH A WEEK'S SPUD-BASHING DUTY!

THEN A SINGLE RIFLE CRACKED OUT IN THE DARKNESS AND A BULLET WHISTLED PAST THEIR HEADS
LUMME! IT'S AN AMBUSH!
GET THOSE BRENS FIRING!


THE SEARCHLIGHT BEAM STABBED THROUGH THE DARKNESS WITH THE GUNS' ANSWERING FIRE
STONE ME – FLIPPING ARABS! MUST HAVE TRIED TO CATCH US ON THE HOP, TO KNOCK US OFF FOR OUR GUNS. EVEN AN ORDINARY BRITISH RIFLE IS WORTH A COUPLE OF CAMELS TO THOSE THIEVING BUGHTERS!

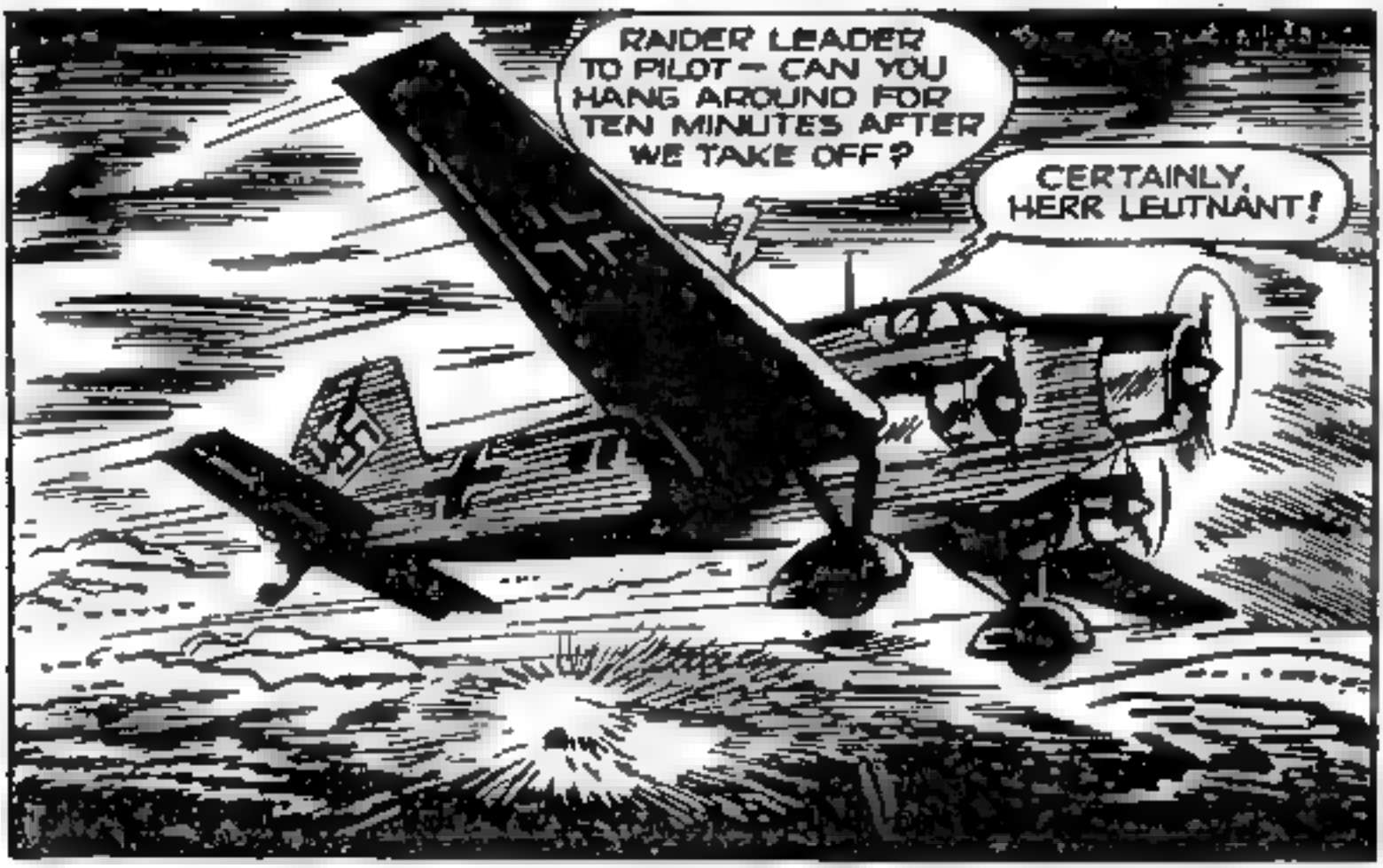
HALF A MILE BEYOND THE AMBUSH
SNAP TO IT – FELLOW BEL BLOCHER'S ORDERS ARE TO DELAY THAT PATROL FOR NO MORE THAN TEN MINUTES!

A HUNDRED POUNDS OF HIGH EXPLOSIVE WERE PLACED UNDER THE RAILS – AND KURT WEBER SET THE FUSES...
ONLY AFTER SIX SETS OF WHEELS HAVE PASSED OVER THIS FUSE WILL IT DETONATE – THAT MEANS IT WILL TAKE A TRAIN TO SET IT OFF! RIGHT, OFF YOU GO!

TEN MINUTES UP – NOW! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE. MOVE!

A Cage Of Tigers

THE GREAT TRANSPORT PLANE HAD TURNED FOR TAKE-OFF. IT WAITED, ENGINES THROBBING IMPATIENTLY...
EVERYTHING WENT LIKE CLOCKWORK—NOW IT'S UP TO YOUR CHIEF!
EXCELLENT! LET'S GO HOME!


RAIDER LEADER TO PILOT — CAN YOU HANG AROUND FOR TEN MINUTES AFTER WE TAKE OFF?
CERTAINLY, HERR LEUTNANT!

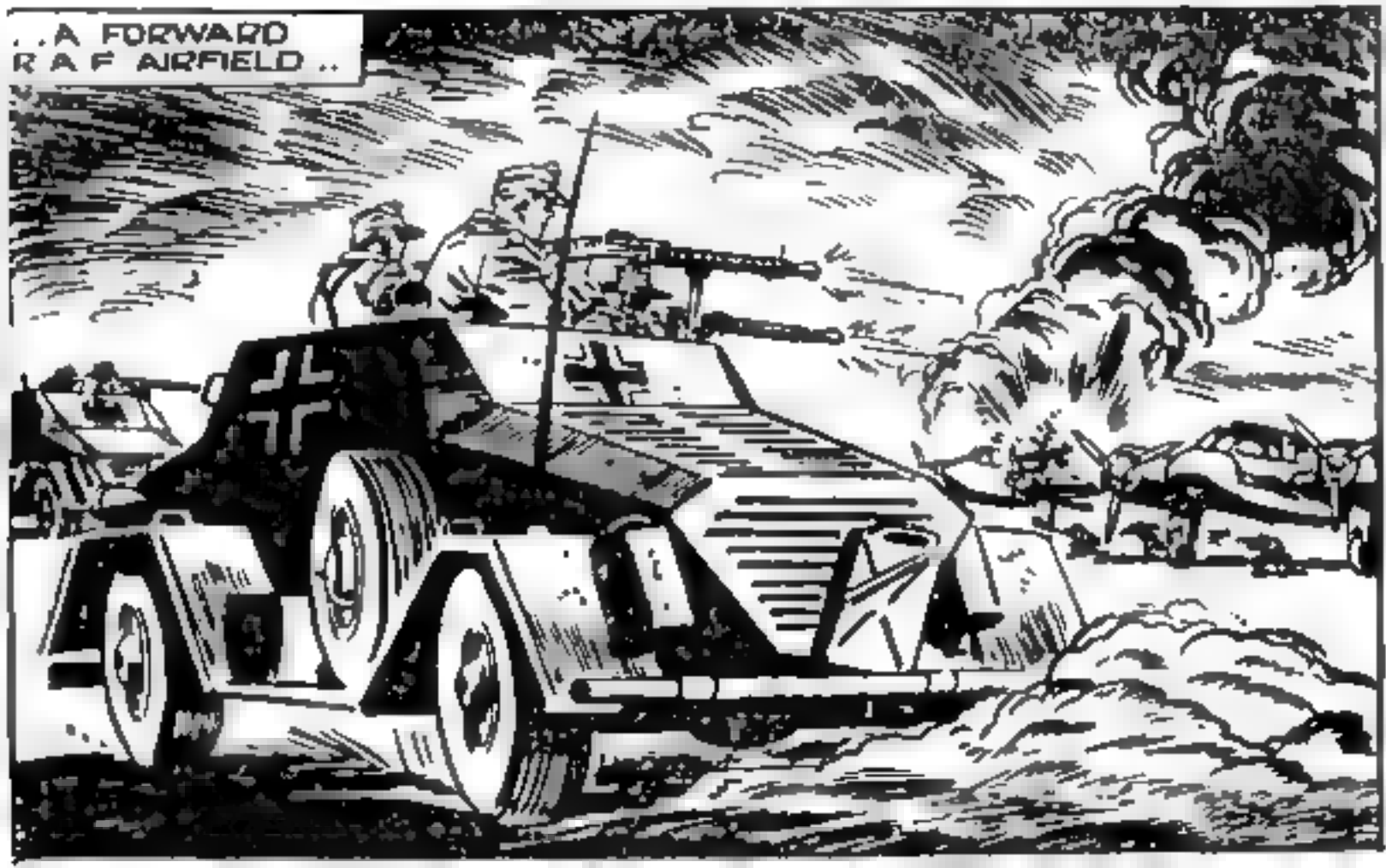
THE JUNKERS LIFTED HIGH INTO A CLIMBING TURN—AND KURT WEBER EXCITEDLY POINTED TOWARDS THE RAILWAY LINE.
LOOK AT THAT! A SUPPLY TRAIN—NOW, WILL OUR CHARGES WORK?

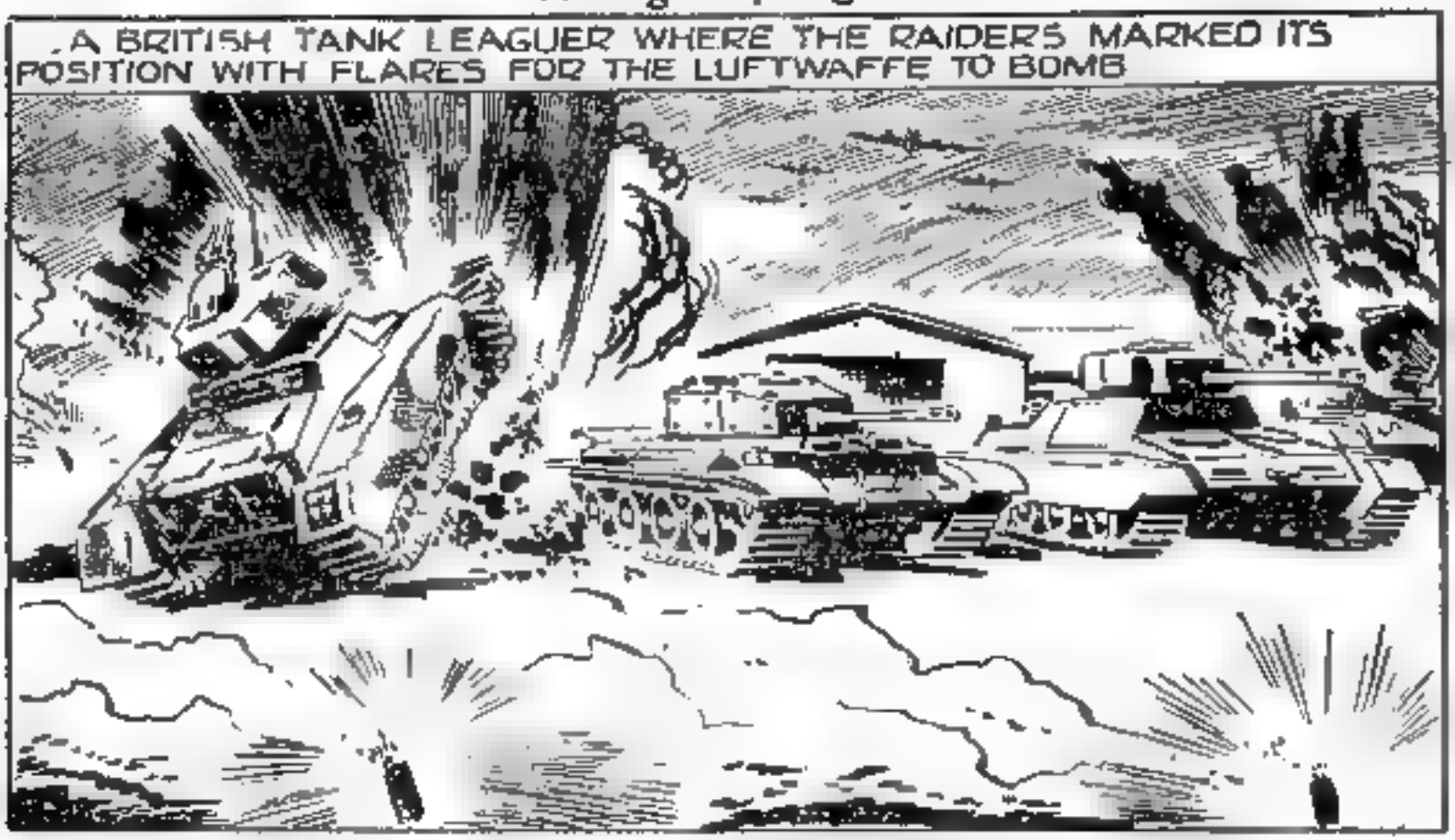
THE TRAIN CLACKED OVER THE EXPLOSIVE CHARGES—AND THEN ..

A CHEER FILLED THE RAIDERS' PLANE
MUNDERBAR— WONDERFUL! OUR FIRST SUCCESS, HERR LEUTNANT!
JA! A PITY THAT IT WAS AN EMPTY SUPPLY TRAIN GOING TO THE PORT TO BE LOADED — BUT ITS WRECKAGE WILL STILL BE ENOUGH TO PUT THE LINE OUT OF ACTION FOR A WEEK.

BACK AT THEIR BASE, SEVERAL HOURS LATER, THEIR TRIUMPH WAS GREETED WITH JUBILATION.
BRILLIANTLY PLANNED AND CARRIED OUT! LEUTNANT WEBER, I KNOW THIS IS ONLY THE START OF MANY EVEN FINER EXPLOITS BY YOUR RAIDERS!
A GOOD JOB, PERHAPS — BUT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN EVEN BETTER DONE BY MY S.A. MEN!

A Cage Of Tigers




A BRITISH TANK LEAGUER WHERE THE RAIDERS MARKED ITS POSITION WITH FLARES FOR THE LUFTWAFFE TO BOMB

IT WAS AS THEY WERE RETURNING FROM THE LATEST OF THESE MISSIONS THAT SOMETHING HAPPENED...
OUR WATER CANS CAUGHT SOME BULLETS, HERR LEUTNANT. WE'LL HAVE TO HAVE SOME OF YOURS.
THERE'S AN ARAB VILLAGE, SADI KEFIR, A FEW KILOMETRES FROM HERE. WE'LL GET WATER THERE!

SADI KEFIR? DIDN'T I HEAR THAT THEY'RE MORE FRIENDLY TO THE BRITISH THAN TO US?
MAYBE—BUT THEY CAN'T DENY US TWO OR THREE GOATSKINS OF WATER IN EXCHANGE FOR SOME OF OUR TINNED RATIONS!

THEY FOUND THE SMALL VILLAGE— OR WHAT WAS LEFT OF IT. .
TELIFEL! WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

A WEAK GROAN BROUGHT KURT WEBER TO THE SIDE OF ONE OF THE SPRAWLED ARAB FIGURES...
AH — MORE GERMAN KILLERS! HAVEN'T YOU — DESTROYED ENOUGH? OUR VILLAGE — EVERY MAN...
GERMANS— DID THIS?

THEY CAME—WEARING THE CROOKED CROSS ON THEIR ARMS— ACCUSING US OF HIDING ARMS AND AMMUNITION — FOR THE BRITISH. IN THE NAME OF ALLAH — WE DENIED IT— SO THEY SEARCHED — FOUND NOTHING — AND DID THIS!
THE S.A.!

THE OLD ARAB'S EYES CLOSED—AND THE ONLY LIVING THINGS IN THE VILLAGE WERE THE RAIDERS.
RUTZ AND HIS NAZI FIENDS! WHILE WE FIGHT FOR THE FATHERLAND, THEY KILL AND DESTROY WITHOUT REASON. WHEN WE GET BACK TO H.Q...

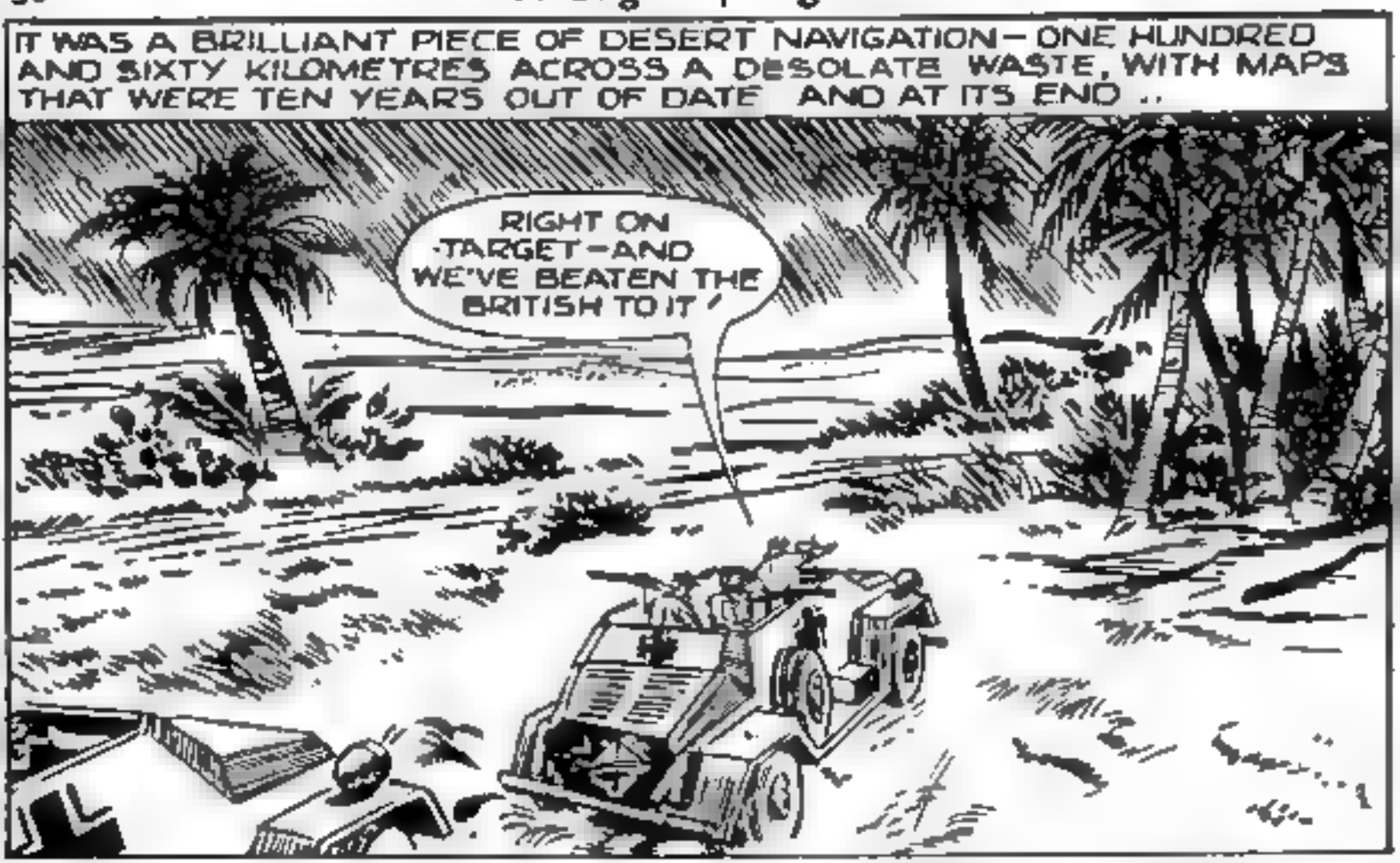
AT THE H.Q. COLONEL FAUST LISTENED TO WEBER'S STORY..
...ONLY MAD DOGS COULD HAVE DONE THAT TO DEFENCELESS PEOPLE, HERR OBERST. SUCH ACTIONS COULD WEAKEN OUR OWN SOLDIERS' WILL TO FIGHT WITH MEN LIKE THE NAZIS!
I AGREE IN EVERY WAY. YOUR REPORT WILL GO TO THE GENERAL FOR A FULL ENQUIRY!

BUT BEFORE THAT THERE IS A VITALLY URGENT TASK FOR YOUR TIGERS / YOU'LL HAVE TO GO OUT AGAIN IMMEDIATELY- ON THE MOST IMPORTANT MISSION OF YOUR LIFE!
THE MEN ARE TIRED, SIR- BUT IF IT'S THAT VITAL, WE'RE READY!

YESTERDAY, ONE OF OUR PLANES FLYING FROM ITALY WENT OFF COURSE-AND WAS SHOT DOWN IN THE SOUTHERN DESERT THE PILOT WAS KILLED-BUT THE PASSENGER LIVED, THOUGH INJURED. THAT PASSENGER IS GENERAL VON KLEIST-ONE OF THE ARMY'S TOP PLANNING STAFF! HIS CAPTURE IS WORTH TWO DIVISIONS TO THE BRITISH!

WE WANT HIM RESCUED-BY YOU! OUR LATEST INTELLIGENCE IS THAT A SMALL ESCORT CONVOY IS TAKING HIM TO CAIRO AND TONIGHT THEY'LL STOP AT THE OASIS AT BAHR-ES-KEBIR THAT IS YOUR AMBUSH SPOT.
I'VE HEARD OF IT, SIR- ABOUT EIGHT HOURS HARD DRIVING IN DAYLIGHT. WE'LL START AT ONCE!

Chapter 3. The Spy


IT WAS A BRILLIANT PIECE OF DESERT NAVIGATION — ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY KILOMETRES ACROSS A DESOLATE WASTE, WITH MAPS THAT WERE TEN YEARS OUT OF DATE AND AT ITS END ..
RIGHT ON TARGET — AND WE'VE BEATEN THE BRITISH TO IT!

IN SECONDS, THE AMBUSH WAS LAID...
SCHNELL — SCHNELL! THE BRITISH MUST BE ALMOST HERE!

TWENTY MINUTES LATER, A JEEP CAME WARILY ALONG THE TRACK TO THE OASIS..
LOOKS OKAY— I'LL GIVE 'EM THE ALL CLEAR TO COME ON!

LET ME HELP...
THE HERR GENERAL DOES NOT NEED YOUR HELP. I ALONE AM ENOUGH.

A Cage Of Tigers

DANKE, LEUTNANT WEBER! AS HAUPTMANN MULLER HAS SAID, THIS IS WONDERFUL WORK!
YOU ARE HAUPTMANN MULLER?
JAWOHL — OF THE EIGHTY-SEVENTH FIGHTER SQUADRON. MY MESSERSCHMITT WAS SHOT DOWN NEAR WHERE THE HERR GENERAL ALSO CRASHED. LIKE HIM, I WAS CAPTURED — IT WAS LUCKY THAT I WAS TRAVELLING WITH HIM!

THE AMBUSH HAD LASTED ONLY MINUTES..
IF IT WERE ME, WEBER, I'D SHOOT THEM ALL WITH PLEASURE — AND RID THE REICH OF TEN MORE ENEMIES!
MY MEN DO NOT SHOOT UNARMED PRISONERS! WE ARE SOLDIERS — NOT NAZI BUTCHERS!

MULLER'S EYES FLASHED. HE WAS ABOUT TO SNARL AT KURT WEBER, WHEN THE GENERAL GASPED WITH PAIN AS THE VEHICLE JOLTED...
AAAH— MY SHOULDER..
I'M SORRY, SIR— BUT WE MUST KEEP GOING FOR ANOTHER TEN KILOMETRES AT LEAST. THEN WE WILL CAMP FOR THE NIGHT —AND GO ON IN THE MORNING.

WEBER WAS NAVIGATING BY A STAR BUT HE KNEW THAT THIS WAS NOT GOOD ENOUGH OVER LONG DISTANCES. HE NEEDED DAYLIGHT FOR ACCURACY SO, HALF AN HOUR LATER ..
WE'LL CAMP HERE UNTIL DAWN— A SENTRY AT THE TOP OF THE BANK WILL BE ENOUGH.

WITH A GUARD ALERT AT THE TOP OF THE BANK, THE RAIDERS SETTLED DOWN IN THE WADI..
WHAT'S MADE THE HERR HAUPTMANN SO UNSOCIABLE, SIR? IT'S MORE COMFORTABLE ON THE SAND THAN ON THAT ARMOUR PLATE!
PROBABLY THINKS THAT A NAZI IS TOO GOOD TO SHARE THE SAME BIT OF SAND WITH ORDINARY MEN! OR MAYBE IT'S JUST BECAUSE I GET IN HIS HAIR...

DAWN CAME WITHOUT TROUBLE ..
I BET HE'S STIFF ALL OVER NOW, NOT JUST HIS NAZI NECK!
WITH LUCK, SIR, YOU'LL BE IN OUR H.Q. FOR A LATE LUNCH.

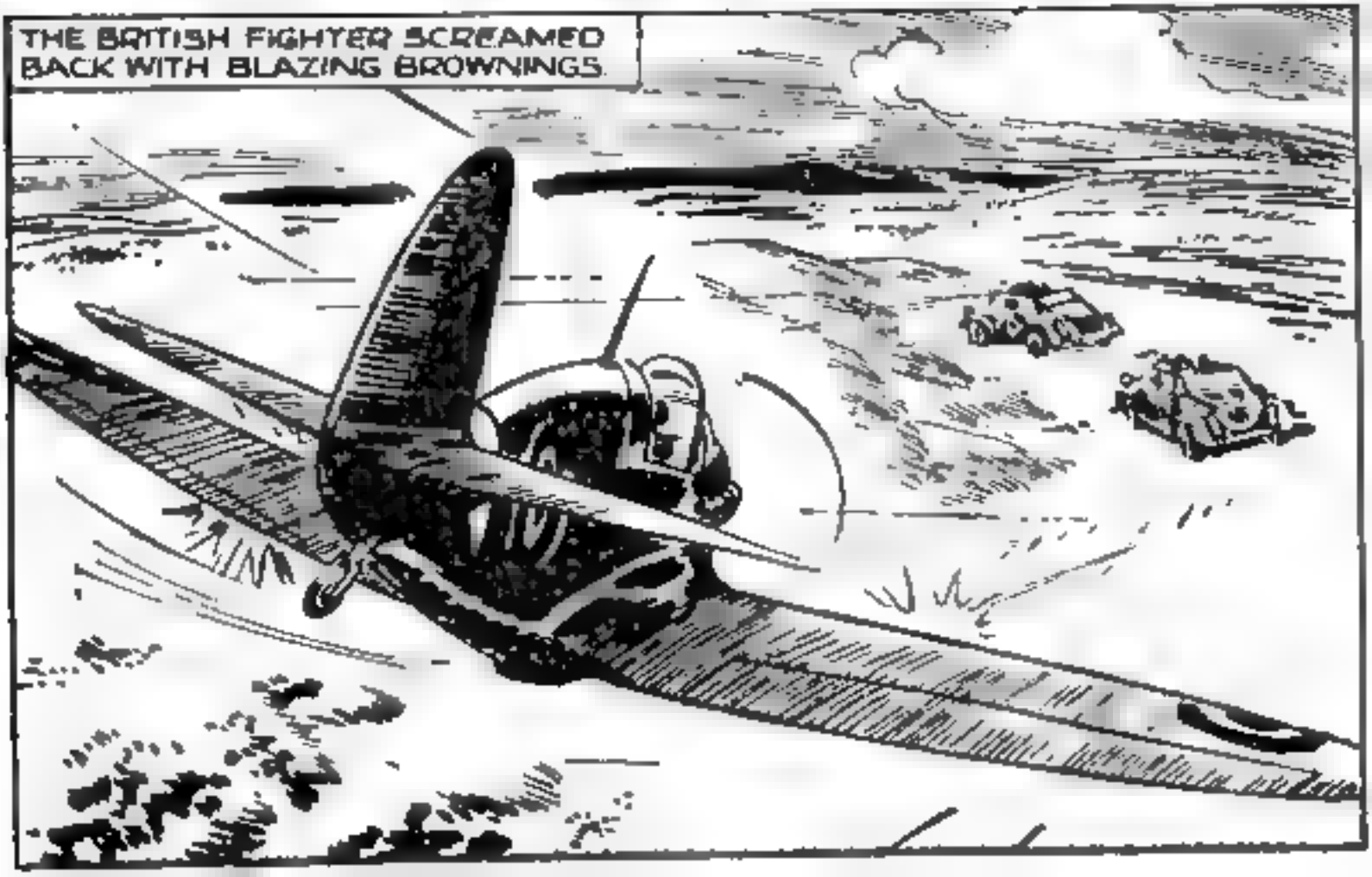
THE COURSE I AM NAVIGATING, SIR, WILL TAKE US BETWEEN THIRTY AND THIRTY-FIVE KILOMETRES SOUTH OF ENEMY GROUND AND AIR PATROL LIMITS.
YOU CALL THAT NAVIGATING? HUH- ANY LUFTWAFFE PILOT COULD DO IT TO THIRTY KILOMETRES EXACTLY! I'LL SHOW YOU .
THAT'S ENOUGH, MULLER! LEUTNANT WEBER IS IN COMMAND HERE - AND HE WILL NAVIGATE

A Cage Of Tigers

WEBER'S VOICE WAS GRANITE HARD.
NO-MOVING MAKES DUST/ IT COULDN'T FAIL TO SEE THAT-AND THEN US/ WE'LL STICK TIGHT. IN CASE IT DOESN'T SEE US-IF IT DOES, WE'LL FIGHT/
YOU ARE STILL IN COMMAND, LEUTNANT.

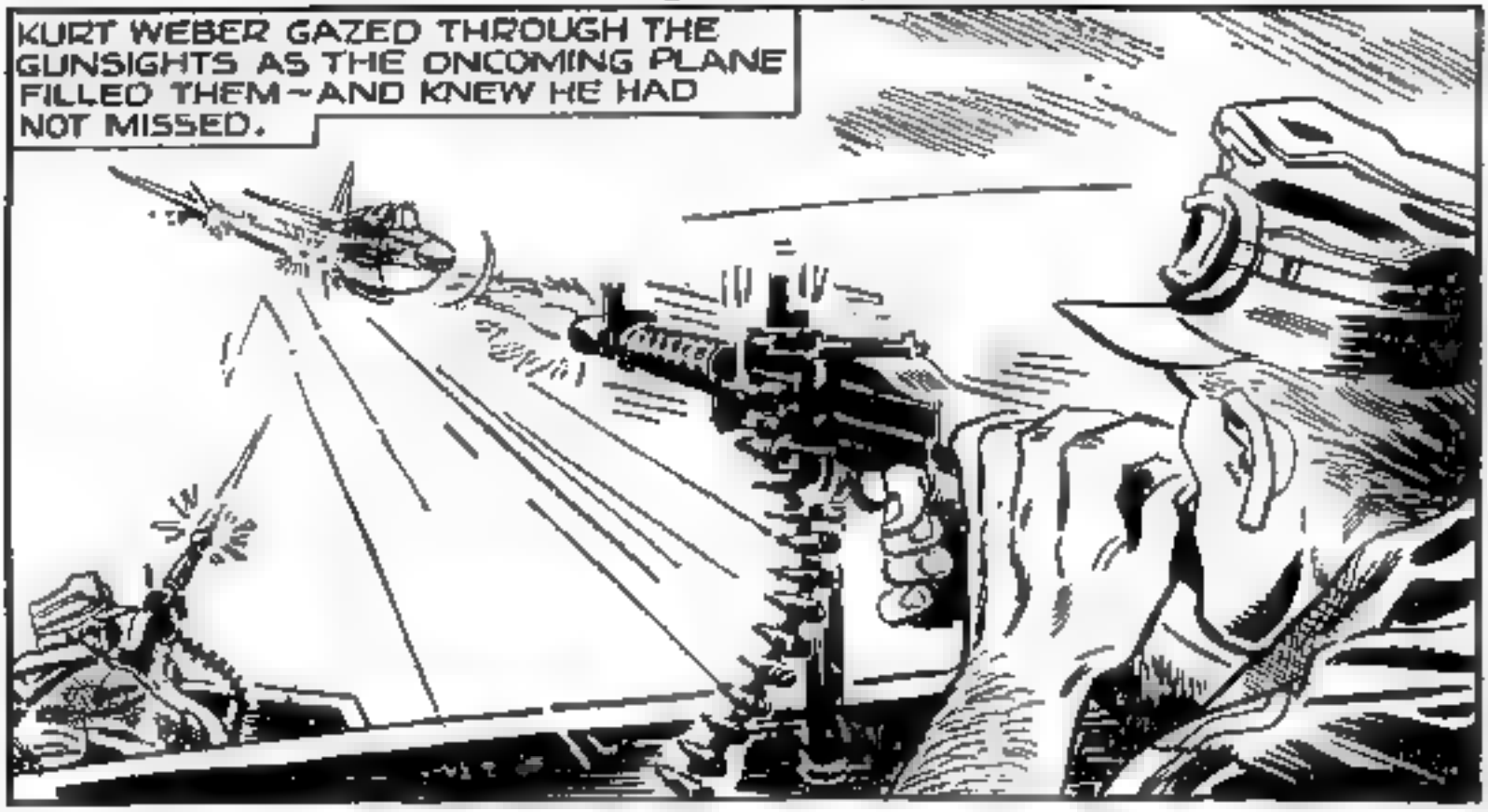
THE SPITFIRE CAME CLOSER- CLOSER- AND STARTED TO DIVE...
IT'S SEEN US-PROBABLY DIVING TO IDENTIFY US/ GET READY TO GIVE IT EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT AS IT COMES IN...

THE SPITFIRE SHUDDERED INTO THAT BULLET HAIL—AND STREAKED THROUGH IT!
BLITZEN! WE HIT IT, BUT NOT A KILL—NOW WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE SOME IN RETURN!


THE BRITISH FIGHTER SCREAMED BACK WITH BLAZING BROWNINGS.

AAAGH!
BLOCHER!

GERMAN MACHINE GUN SLUGS TRACKED AFTER THE ZOOMING SPITFIRE—BUT THE RAIDERS HAD BEEN HARD HIT...
GET THOSE WOUNDED MEN UNDER COVER—HERE HE COMES AGAIN! IF WE DON'T BEAT HIM OFF THIS TIME, WE'RE REALLY IN TROUBLE!


KURT WEBER GAZED THROUGH THE GUNSIGHTS AS THE ONCOMING PLANE FILLED THEM—AND KNEW HE HAD NOT MISSED.

DARN IT! THAT LAST BURST OF THEIRS MUST HAVE NICKED A FUEL TANK—I'LL BE LUCKY IF THERE'S ENOUGH LEFT TO GET ME BACK TO BASE!

HOW IS THE FELDWEBEL?
HE NEEDS A DOCTOR—AND SOON, HERR LEUTNANT!

A HARSH VOICE SNAPPED KURT WEBER AROUND...
SO—OUR COURSE WOULD BE THIRTY KILOMETRES SOUTH OF ANY ENEMY LAND OR AIR PATROLS! I TOLD YOU WE WERE TOO FAR NORTH—AND THIS HAS PROVED IT!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT, HERR HAUPTMANN! NOW WE MUST MOVE AT TOP SPEED TO GET THE GENERAL AND THE WOUNDED BACK—AND ALSO TO AVOID THE TROUBLE THAT THE PLANE'S REPORT WILL BRING!
KURT WEBER WAS NOT INTERESTED IN TRAVELLING CAREFULLY ANY MORE— THE ENEMY HAD FOUND HIM ONCE AND HE WAS GOING TO USE SPEED TO AVOID ANY SECOND CLASH...
SORRY ABOUT THE JOLTING, BLOCHER— BUT WE'VE GOT TO MOVE FAST!
NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT ME, SIR—OUR JOB IS TO GET THE GENERAL BACK AND THIS IS THE ONLY WAY LEFT!
KURT WEBER COUNTED EVERY KILOMETRE PASSING BENEATH THE CHURNING WHEELS— WHEELS THAT TOOK HIM NEARER AND NEARER TO..
LOOK, SIR— SOMETHING'S MAKING A HECK OF A LOT OF DUST.

THE BRITISH OFFICER LIFTED HIS FIELD GLASSES...

MISTER CLARKE, TAKE A TWO POUNDER AND BRENS—TWO HUNDRED YARDS OUT ON THE RIGHT FLANK—SERGEANT MARK. THE SAME ON THE LEFT! KEEP OUT OF SIGHT UNTIL WE OPEN FIRE!
RIGHT, SIR!
SIR!

ON AND ON CAME THE SCOUT CARS—TOWARDS THE WAITING TRAP. THEN SUDDENLY KURT WEBER'S EVER-SEARCHING EYES WIDENED IN ALARM...
ACHTUNG— ENEMY AHEAD! GO LEFT—AND FASTER!

BUT IN THAT BRIEF INSTANT .

THE SECOND SCOUT CAR SLAMMED TO A STOP BESIDE ITS OVERTURNED TWIN...
LEUTNANT- ARE YOU ALL RIGHT ?

AGAIN THREE BRITISH MORTAR BOMBS BLASTED CLOSE.
WHAT'LL WE DO, SIR? THEY'LL GET US IF WE STAY HERE...
IF WE COULD KNOCK OUT ONE OF THOSE ENEMY GUNS... THAT ONE TO THE SOUTH...

WEBER MOVED LIKE A TIGER...
AT THAT SOUTHERN GUN, KAPORAL—I'LL GIVE YOU COVERING FIRE!
I'M WITH YOU, SIR!

FOR A MOMENT THE BRITISH FIRE SLACKENED, STUNNED BY THE FEROCIOUS ACCURACY OF KURT WEBER'S COVERING FIRE – AND THE KAPORAL GOT HIS SHOTS IN.

THEN THE BRITISH BRENS HIT BACK..
DOWN, LEUTNANT – IT'S SUICIDE TO STAY UP THERE WITHOUT YOU, WE WOULD BE LOST – I AM ORDERING YOU – GET DOWN!

THE GENERAL AND THE WOUNDED HAVE GOT TO BE GOT OUT OF HERE THEY'LL GO IN THE SURVIVING CAR WITH ONE UNWOUNDED MAN AS DRIVER I'LL STAY HERE WITH HAUPTMANN MULLER AND THE OTHER UNWOUNDED MEN TO COVER THEIR DASH SOUTH.

YOU'LL ALL BE STAYING HERE TO CERTAIN DEATH, WEBER!
I'LL STAY WITH YOU
NO, ALL THE WOUNDED GO! GET THEM ON THE CAR, YOU MEN, WITHOUT EXPOSING THEM

BUT BEFORE A MAN COULD MOVE..
NO—YOU'LL ALL DIE, THE WOUNDED AS WELL NOBODY CAN GET OUT OF THIS ALIVE—UNLESS YOU SURRENDER! YOU'VE GOT TO SURRENDER—YOU MUST!

KURT WEBER STARED UNBELIEVINGLY. MULLER, A FANATICAL NAZI, WAS TELLING HIM TO SURRENDER! HIS LIP CURLED WITH CONTEMPT...
THE DRIVER OF THE WOUNDED WILL BE HAUPTMANN MULLER—WE DON'T NEED A COWARD HERE! JUMP TO IT—THE WOUNDED WILL MOVE OFF IN TEN SECONDS OR THEIR CHANCE WILL BE GONE!
STAY WHERE YOU ARE! I'M GIVING THE ORDERS NOW—WITH THIS SCHMEISSER—YOU'RE GOING TO SURRENDER, WEBER!
MULLER—I'LL HAVE YOU SHOT FOR THIS..
NEIN, HERR GENERAL—I AM SAVING YOU ALL FROM BEING SHOT! DROP YOUR GUNS—THEN ONE OF YOU WILL SHOW A WHITE FLAG!
HE'D GET SOME OF US FIRST, HERR LEUTNANT, BUT ONE OF US WOULD GET HIM WHEN YOU SAID THE WORD...

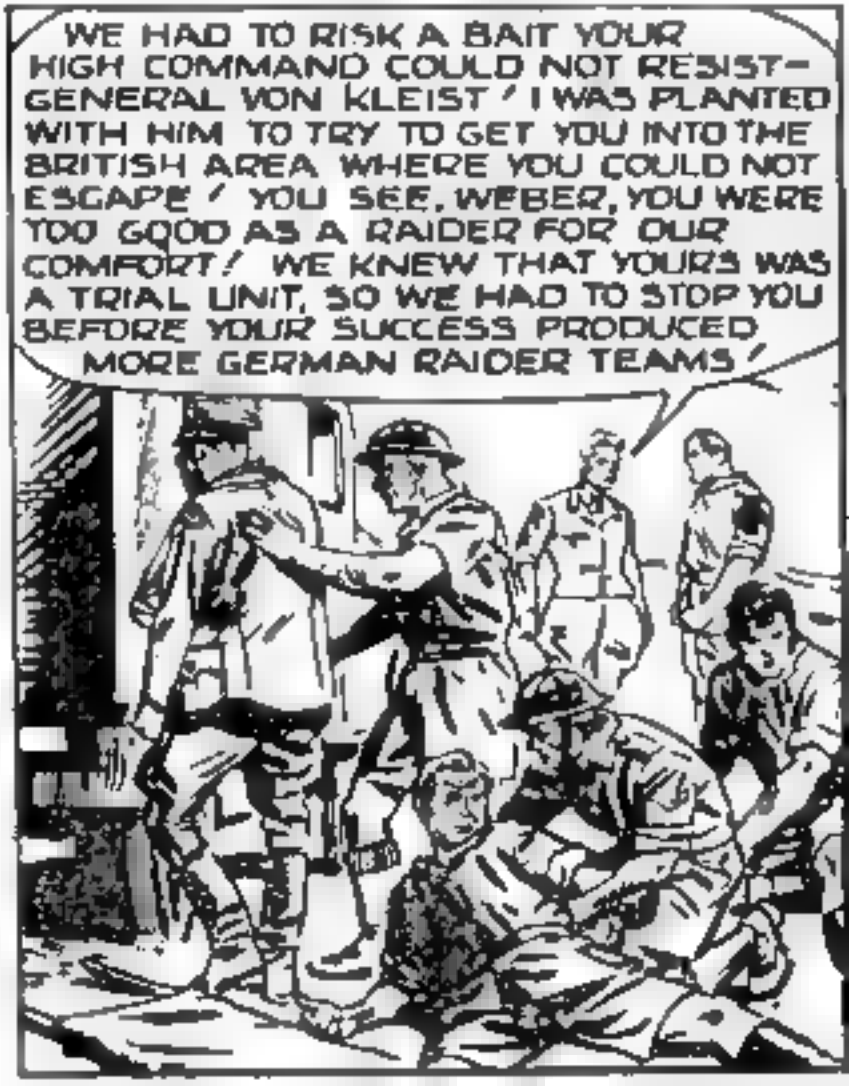
THERE WAS A DETERMINED HARDNESS IN MULLER'S EYES THAT WEBER HAD NEVER SEEN THERE BEFORE—AND HIS OWN SHOULDERS SAGGED.
NO—THE PRICE WOULD BE TOO GREAT! ANYWAY, THE CHANCE OF ESCAPE HAS PASSED. DO AS HE ORDERS!
WHITE FLAG! THEY'RE SURRENDERING!

WARILY THE BRITISH CLOSED IN..
GREAT SCOTT! WHAT THE DEVIL GOES ON HERE?
YOU COWARDLY NAZI DOG, MULLER - TO SAVE YOUR OWN YELLOW SKIN, YOU'VE WRECKED A MISSION VITAL TO GERMANY!

MULLER LOWERED THE SCHMEISSER
YOU'D BETTER HAVE THIS! WOULD YOU CALL UP AN AMBULANCE TRUCK AND A DOCTOR URGENTLY, PLEASE, TO TAKE CARE OF THESE WOUNDED MEN?

ALL EYES TURNED IN ASTONISHMENT TO MULLER AS HIS WORDS HUNG IN THE AIR – IN ENGLISH!
I AM CAPTAIN JOHN MILLER OF ARMY SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE. I'VE NO IDENTITY PAPERS ON ME – BUT AS SOON AS I AM IN CONTACT WITH H.Q. I'LL PROVE IT! WHEW, IT'S GOOD TO SEE BRITISH KHAKI AGAIN!
YOU – YOU'RE BRITISH – A BRITISH INTELLIGENCE AGENT?

JOHN MILLER NODDED...
BEATEN BY A SPY! NOT DEFEATED FIGHTING IN ACTION – BUT FOOLED AND TRAPPED BY ONE MAN!
IT WAS THE ONLY WAY IT COULD BE DONE. WE NEVER KNEW WHERE YOUR RAIDERS WERE GOING TO STRIKE NEXT, SO WE HAD TO MAKE YOU FIND US!


WE HAD TO RISK A BAIT YOUR HIGH COMMAND COULD NOT RESIST – GENERAL VON KLEIST! I WAS PLANTED WITH HIM TO TRY TO GET YOU INTO THE BRITISH AREA WHERE YOU COULD NOT ESCAPE! YOU SEE, WEBER, YOU WERE TOO GOOD AS A RAIDER FOR OUR COMFORT! WE KNEW THAT YOURS WAS A TRIAL UNIT, SO WE HAD TO STOP YOU BEFORE YOUR SUCCESS PRODUCED MORE GERMAN RAIDER TEAMS!

BUT HOW—HOW DID YOU TRAP US? I NAVIGATED CORRECTLY BY THE SUN COMPASS...
YOU NAVIGATED CORRECTLY—BUT I ALTERED THE SUN COMPASS BY TWO DEGREES, SO YOUR CORRECT COURSE LED YOU MUCH FURTHER NORTH!

SO—MY TIGERS WERE BECOMING SUCH A BIG PROBLEM TO YOU BRITISH? THEN WE WERE OF SOME USE TO THE FATHERLAND, HERR CAPTAIN!
YOU DID MORE THAN YOUR SHARE, KURT. BUT YOUR CAPTURE WILL BRING THE WAR'S END A LITTLE NEARER. THE SOONER IT IS ALL OVER, THE MORE ORDINARY GERMAN SOLDIERS WILL STILL BE ALIVE—MEN WHO, LIKE YOU, ARE NOT NAZIS AND ONLY FIGHT AS PATRIOTS FOR THEIR COUNTRY!

SOME OF THE BITTERNESS WENT OUT OF KURT WEBER AS THE TRUTH OF JOHN MILLER'S WORDS FOUND AN ECHO IN HIS OWN HEART...
I HAVE SEEN WHAT THE NAZIS HAVE DONE AND ALTHOUGH I FORCED MYSELF NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT, I KNEW THE TIME WOULD COME WHEN I COULD STAND THEIR EVIL NO MORE! I HAVE DONE MY DUTY, BUT NOW THE CHOICE OF FIGHTING ON FOR THE NAZIS IS NO LONGER MINE, I FEEL A GREAT RELIEF

A Cage Of Tigers

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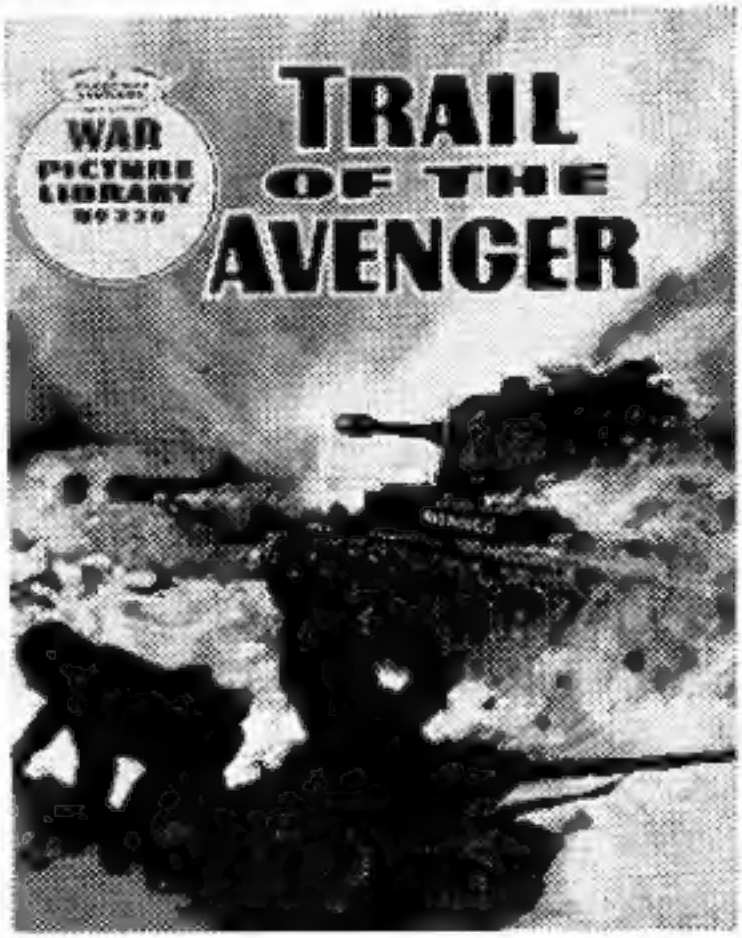

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